

the Middle Ages. I. The church taught doctrines and alleged facts about the wickedness of aberrant opinions. II. The masses, accepting these teachings, built deductions upon them, and drew inferences as to the proper treatment of dissenters. They put the inferences in effect by lynching acts. III. The leaders of society accepted the leadership of these popular movements, and the church went on to teach hatred of dissenters and extreme abuse of them. It elevated persecution to a theory of social welfare by the extermination of dissenters, reduced the views and notions of the masses to dogmas, and led in selection by murder. IV. These ideas and practices were then vulgarized by the masses again. Trial by torture, bloody executions, and finally witchcraft persecutions were the results in the next stage. Witchcraft persecutions were not selective. They are well worth study as the greatest illustration of the degree of aberration which the mores may undergo, but they lie aside from the present topic. In savage life alleged witchcraft is punished with great torture and a painful death,¹ but nothing of the kind is found in any of the great religions except Latin Christianity.

¹ Fritsch, *Eingeb. Sud-Afr*^ 99,